



State of Arizona  
Department of Education

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Superintendent of  
Public Instruction

## **CHARACTER EDUCATION BLUE RIBBON TASK FORCE FACT SHEET - 2005**

### **Vision**

To develop youth to act and live with positive character values.

### **Mission**

To inspire and support parents, educators and others who touch the lives of youth to instill in youth the traits of positive character.

### **Character Education Defined**

Character education teaches universally-accepted values, such as trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship, and motivates youth to incorporate these values into their lives. Character education should be non-partisan and non-religious.

### **Program Overview**

Arizona will be a leader and model state for character education by: providing voluntary education and training on the core values of trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship to educators, leaders of youth nonprofit organizations, children and their families in Arizona. This will be made possible through collaborations with businesses, educators, community organizations, the State of Arizona, state and local agencies that deal with parents and youth, Sovereign Nations, all other levels of government, youth sports programs and all stakeholders that work with youth.

### **Statistics Related to Arizona Children and Schools**

- 1,476,856 children under age 18 in Arizona (2002)
- 1,011,959 children are enrolled in Arizona Schools (2004)
- 1330 Locally Governed School Districts in Arizona (2004)
- 502 Charter Schools Operating (2004)
- 46% of Arizona 4<sup>th</sup> grade students scored below basic reading level (2003)
- 34% of Arizona 8<sup>th</sup> grade students scored below basic reading level (2003)
- Juveniles detained and incarcerated: 1,884 (2001)
- 16% of teens 16-19 drop out of high school (2000). AZ ranks 50 in the U.S.
- The teen birth rate is 37 per 1,000 females ages 15-17 (2001). AZ ranks 47 in the U.S.

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All statistics are approximations.

All the statistics regarding number of students, schools and teachers were taken from the Arizona Department of Education website on August, 2004. Additional youth statistics were taken from KIDS Count Data Book (2004)